

NEUTRON BOMB, NUCLEAR TESTS— NEXT DECISIONS FOR U.S.

Two issues that could mean the life or death of this nation are crowding in upon the Kennedy Administration for decision.

Issue 1—the neutron bomb. In an article written exclusively for "U. S. News & World Report," Senator Thomas J. Dodd (Dem.), of Connecticut, points out the big advantages

that could be gained by the first nation to perfect this fantastic weapon.

Issue 2—atomic tests. In another exclusive article, arguments against U. S. resumption of tests are answered by Representative Carl Albert (Dem.), of California, head of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy.

N-BOMB: "IDEAL WEAPON FOR DEFENSE"

by Senator Thomas J. Dodd, of Connecticut

Perhaps because it distills, or crystallizes, all the other issues involved, the national debate on the larger question of the nuclear-test-ban moratorium now appears to be focusing with increasing sharpness on the neutron bomb.

CPYRGHT I spoke about the neutron bomb in the Senate on May 12, 1960, and described it as a weapon which had the ability to kill without physical destruction, one national periodical ran a note captioned, "Dodd Bomb a Dud." Subsequent to my speech, there were several skeptical references to the neutron bomb in statements by nuclear physicists of some repute. Today, there is not a single objective scientist with knowledge in this area who would question the scientific feasibility of the neutron bomb.

Even though there is now no serious argument about its scientific feasibility, the debate about the neutron bomb is growing. Until recently, this debate has been carried on behind closed doors and under classified label. Today it is out in the open, where it ought to be.

In my opinion, all the hush-hush about the neutron bomb represents a glaring instance of the official abuse of secrecy. Since there almost certainly will be such a thing as a neutron bomb, and since there is a serious danger that the Russians might beat us to its development, the American people are entitled to this information. To keep the facts about the nuclear age from our people is both foolish and dangerous.

There are many qualified experts, including scientists, military men and weapons technologists, who consider the neutron bomb a weapon of revolutionary significance, one that might very well cost the lives of millions of Americans. On the other hand, there are those who now claim that its



—USN&WR Photo

potential military significance has been grossly overrated, and that we have other weapons that can accomplish much the same purpose.

They argue that the neutron bomb is not an important enough reason for the resumption of testing of new weapons. According to the "New York Times," such a debate is now going on within the President's advisory staff.

Over the past two weeks, the latter point of view has been reflected in a number of articles in the national press, purportedly based on high-level information. These articles contained so many inaccuracies and misconceptions that I feel they must be considered evidence of a deliberate effort to downgrade the significance of the neutron bomb.

The opponents of renewed testing, the last-ditch defenders of the moratorium on testing, find it increasingly difficult to oppose the neutron bomb on scientific grounds. Therefore, they dredge up every conceivable argument, some pseudo-military, some just plain nonsensical, for not being worried about the neutron bomb.

The purpose of this article is to set the record straight on the most serious of these misconceptions and inaccuracies.

1. The most serious misconception was stated in summary, in a recent headline in a Washington newspaper: "Neutron Bomb Dwarfed by H, Despite Furore." This article concluded with the words, "One thing seems certain: A neutron bomb will be no match for the hydrogen bomb. Nor can its development be considered a giant leap beyond the H-bomb."

This completely misses the point. No one, to my knowledge, has ever suggested that the neutron bomb would have a greater explosive power than the hydrogen bomb. The neutron bomb would, nevertheless, have a revolutionary